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**Globalisation in the Malaysian context:
The experience of Malay adolescents with ‘conduct
disorders’**

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

In

Psychology

At Massey University,

Manawatū Aotearoa/New Zealand

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2017

Abstract

The process of globalisation offers opportunities for a country to progress to be a greater and more competitive nation. The Malaysian government is highly inspired by the concept of globalisation in progressing towards the vision of becoming a developed nation by the year 2020. Globalisation as a process is very demanding, requiring changes to the Malaysian political, cultural, economic, educational and social landscape. These changes have presented immense challenges to Malay adolescents where Western values have conflicted with traditional values and aspirations. Without adequate preparation, the potential incommensurability of values affects the locally defined well-being among Malay adolescents. Given that, how Malay adolescents understand and adapt to the globalisation process remains elusive. Therefore, this research is designed to explore the experiences of Malay adolescents who are considered to experience ‘conduct disorders’ within the Malaysian context of globalisation. This research is a qualitative research inquiry, which utilised Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) as a method of analysis. IPA is an approach that explores in detail personal lived experience to examine what the world is like from the point of view of the participants. Initial data was collected from 28 participants with 12 participants selected from a rehabilitation centre for young offenders in Malaysia for a more thorough analysis. The lived experience of the participants is presented and explained through three levels of analysis, the participants' demographic background and history, detailed life experiences of each case and finally, the meaning they attached to their experiences. The analysis suggests that the understanding of the Malay adolescents is constructed reflecting the changes in the dynamic of all segments of life alongside the emerging new lifestyles that are embedded in the processes of globalisation. Their lived experiences are described by referring to a complex relationship with and various tensions between different tenets. Those tenets include the traditional Malay cultures, values, beliefs and practices, which are much influenced by Islamic teaching, and the emergent new values and worldviews associated with globalisation and modernisation. Due to their vulnerability regarding self-characteristics, innate capabilities and the systemic flaws of relevant support systems, they are described as problematic in meeting the new, yet challenging environment. The participants lost their primary and reliable sources of survival. Instead, they are being introduced to various alternative resources that promote values and cultures that are against the normality of local practices. As a result, they end up in the criminal justice system. Realising that they have gone “off track”, the participants shared their intention to recover through various strategies, which include both action oriented and cognitive frameworks, but at the same time, they expected to face a range of hassles that may contribute to some difficulties for them to make progress. This research comes out with an argument that questions the appropriateness of the relevance of the diagnostic system of conduct disorders as defined in DSM. The experiences of the participants’ suggested that they simply reacted to the changing context which offered immense challenges to their lived experiences. Therefore, rather than disordered the adolescents can be understood as responding to the conflicting conditions they face.

Keywords: Malay adolescents, globalisation, conduct disorders, lived experiences, Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Praise be to Allah SWT for all His blessing and guidance.

I would like to start this section by saying that doing Ph.D. is not a straightforward and trouble-free journey. Without the help and support of all the significant people around me, this thesis might not have come into being. Throughout the journey, there were numbers of individuals and organisations that have helped me endlessly to ensure the process of completing my Ph.D. was such a wonderful and meaningful undertaking.

First of all, warmest gratitude and appreciation goes to my supervisors, Dr Leigh Coombes, Dr Sita Venkateswar and Dr Kirsty Ross for their keen supervisions, persistent confidence and very generous giving of their time, ideas, suggestions and constructive comments throughout the work. Their huge contribution in completing this work is priceless. I am proud to be part of their professional team. This appreciation is also extended to Dr Zainal bin Madon, Head, Department of Human Development and Family Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM) for his willingness to become my site advisor during my data collection process. I am also indebted to Prof. Dr Mandy Morgan, the Head of the School of Psychology who has helped me tirelessly from the beginning of my Ph.D. journey. A note of thanks also goes to Massey University Human Ethics Committees (MUHEC), all staff at the School of Psychology, Massey University, the Dean of Faculty of Human Ecology, UPM, and all members of the Departments of Human Development and family Studies, UPM.

Special thanks to UPM, KPT and Massey University for funding my studies. Without their financial support, the dream to hold a Ph.D. would have remained a dream.

A note of thanks also goes to the Malaysian Planning Unit (EPU) and Malaysian Community Welfare Department, who have granted me with permission to undertake my research at Sekolah Tunas Bakti, Teluk Air Tawar and Asrama Akhlak Paya Terubung, Penang. Personally, I would like to express my acknowledgement to Tuan Muhammad Faizal bin Abu Bakar, the principle of Sekolah Tunas Bakti Telok Air Tawar, who has given me full cooperation and support during the research process. This acknowledgment is also extended to all staff at both the approved school and Asrama Akhlak Paya Terubung.

Also, I would like to acknowledge the support of my family members, especially my parents, Daud bin Ibrahim and Eshah binti Wahab as well as my parents-in-law, Mohd Lutfi bin Abd Hamid and Solehah binti Ahmad for their endless love, support and encouragement. To my wife, Nurussyifa Mohd Lutfi for her unconditional love and understanding. Her sacrifice is highly appreciated. That

of my siblings, in-laws and my nephews and nieces. Had it not been for their emotional support, this work would not have seen the light of the day. Sincerest gratitude for my dear friends Roslan, Lokman, Latip, Saifudin, Afi, Zaidi, Rahimi, Hasri, Fadhil, Fitri, Zul Bahar, Ezani, Armie, Ridzuan, Afeefee, and others for their endless support, sharing of ideas and words of encouragement given to me in the pursuance of this research. Being away from my wife and family, especially at the end of the journey was hard without the warm support from significant others. I'm very grateful as I was able to get over it with the support I have received from my wonderful flatmates: Syahmeer How, Syazlan, Azlan, Nurazham, Rasyid, Hakim, Akmal, Isa, Izzat and Aden. Their presence made my Ph.D. journey more colourful and enjoyable. Thanks to them, who were always there whenever I needed them.

To members of my psychology team, Aris, Azza, Haryati, Arip, Ann, Stephanie, Yayi, Sharon, Sarah, Ross and others, your presence has significantly contributed to my work. Thank you for being part of significant people in my life.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to all the young people who participated in the work.

In memory of my beloved sister:

Almarhumah Saadiah binti Daud

Who passed away on 1st March 2016 while I was at the end of my PhD journey.

May Allah grant her with *Jannah*

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List of abbreviations

BN	: <i>Barisan Nasional</i> (National Front)
CC	:Cyber cafe
DSM	:Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders
EPF	:Employees Provident Fund
GLC	:Government Linked Companies
FGD	:Focus Group Discussion
IPA	:Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
j-Qaf	:Jawi, Quran, Arabic Language, Fardhu Ain
KAFA	: <i>Kelas Agama Fardhu Ain</i> (religious Classes)
KPT	: <i>Kementerian Pengajian Tinggi</i> (Ministry of Higher Education)
KWAP	: <i>Kumpulan Wang Persaraan</i> (Retirement Fund)
LPPKN	: <i>Lembaga Pembangunan Penduduk dan Keluarga Negara</i> (National Population and Family Development Board)
LTAT	: <i>Lembaga Tabung Angkatan Tentera</i> (The Armed Forces Fund Board)
LTH	: <i>Lembaga Tabung Haji</i> (Pilgrims fund Board)
MKD	: <i>Syarikat Menter Kewangan Diperbadankan</i>
MNEs	:Multinational Enterprises
MYR	:Malaysia Ringgit
NYDP	:National Youth Development Program
PBUH	:Peace Be Upon Him
PERKAMA	: <i>Persatuan Kaunseling Malaysia</i> (Malaysia Counselling Association)
PKBM	: <i>Pasukan Kadet Bersatu Malaysia</i> (Malaysia United Cadet Team)
PMR	: <i>Penilaian Menengah Rendah</i> (Lower Secondary Test)
PND	: <i>Permodalan Nasional Berhad</i>
RELA	: <i>Jabatan Sukarelawan Malaysia</i> (The People's Volunteer Corps)
SCT	:Self-Control Theory
SOCSSO	:Social Security Organisation
SPM	: <i>Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia</i> (The Malaysian Certificate of Education)
UMNO	:United Malay National Organisation
UPM	:Universiti Putra Malaysia
UPSR	: <i>Ujian Penilaian Sekolah Rendah</i> (Primary School Evaluation Test)